

THE BELL RINGER

Montgomery Bell Academy

4001 Harding Road Nashville, TN 37205

September, 13 2001

Volume 58, Number 1

Warning: Some Changes in Exam Schedule

by Steven Syverud

As the new school year kicks into gear, MBA students are facing a new exam schedule. The Exam Committee, made up of faculty members from each department of the school, has finalized a program under which some students will be taking two exams in one day come the end of the semester.

Under the new arrangement, the exam period will last for six days with each of the six departments, (English, Fine Arts, Foreign Language, History, Math and Science) being assigned one day to give its exams.

"For most students it will be virtually no change from what they are accustomed to," Dr. Gaffney, the head of the Exam Committee, said.

For those students who are taking two classes in the same field, however, there will be a change. For example, someone who is taking Latin

and French would have to confront a double dose of exams on the day the Foreign Language department gives out its exams. The student would have one three hour exam at 8:00 AM and another three hour exam at 12:30 or 1:00 (the exact time will be determined at the end of the semester). Dr. Gaphne estimated that less than thirty students would end having two exams a day. He also added that those students with two exams on one day, would have at least one other day in the exam period on which they have no exams.

"I hope it wouldn't deter a student from taking Latin and a modern language because he would take two exams," he said.

The catalyst for instituting a new schedule was the many conflicts that arose under the old schedule.

"Over the last four years the

number of conflicts has just mushroomed," Dr. Gaphne, said. "It has been very difficult to sort out. This why for the last few years we have not had an exam in Art and [other classes]."

The Exam Committee began meeting on January 31st of this year to discuss other possibilities for MBA's exams. They looked at the exam procedure at other comparable schools such as St. Ignatius Prep in Chicago, Lovett and Westminster Schools in Atlanta, and Montgomery Academy in Montgomery, Alabama. They found that most schools gave two exams a day by class period with exam lasting two hours.

The Committee, which was open to volunteers, was composed of Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Russ, Mr. Moxley, Mrs. Steele, Dr. Marrow, Mr. Womack, Mr. Deyoung, and Mrs. Dickerson along with Dr. Gaphne. I

In the end, they decided to stay with three hour exams. One of the reasons for the decision, Dr. Gaphne said, was that they "allow AP teachers to give mock AP exams in January."

The Committee decided against giving exams by class periods because it would have only added to the number of conflicts during exam week.

After the new schedule was finalized, the plan was to have the faculty vote on it before it could be instituted. But during departmental meetings there was so much support for the new program that the vote was deemed unnecessary.

"I don't know of anybody who objected to it," Dr. Gaphne said. "I know a lot of people who were happy about it."

Service Club Starts President William Sisk New Year Strong Energizes Senior Class

by Steven Syverud

Freshly exhausted from a full day of school, I headed to St. Vincent de Paul tutoring with a few of my senior classmates. We were eager to help the kids with their homework and have some fun on the playground. After five minutes and about ten missed shots, I was immediately confronted by Joseph's taunting: "You're game is so bad, it's like mashed peas!" Undaunted by my lack of sports ability, I continued to humiliate myself, throwing up many more wild shots that did not even come close to the basket. In the end, everyone on the playground had a satisfying sweat, an enormous smile, and a new friend.

Before Vanderbilt's pathetic attempt to beat MTSU, our parking lot was alive and hopping. After a pre-game shower, our once dirt space was transformed into a grassy mud-pit. Sliding down the hill and darting in and out of parked cars, we managed not only to have a great time but also raise lots of

money for our Habitat House.

Saturday mornings usually leave MBA students, drained from five days of school, in deep sleep. The first Saturday of every month, however, finds 20-25 of MBA's finest cooks ready to harness their culinary skills. After preparing an exquisite meal, everyone leaves covered in a mixture of flour, whipped cream, and chocolate pudding, content with a job well done. Caked in mud and hands raw from hammering all

day, Habitat for Humanity workers enjoy the accomplishment of building a house in only four weekends. Whether helping on the roof, lifting the walls, or putting up siding,

by Patrick Lewis

William Sisk is the senior class president for the 2001-2002 school year.

The typical senior class president has an important role but sticks mainly to the basic needs and wants of the senior class. The typical president asks only for senior privileges and does not want to actually do any work to make MBA a better place.

But then again, William Sisk is not the typical MBA senior class president.

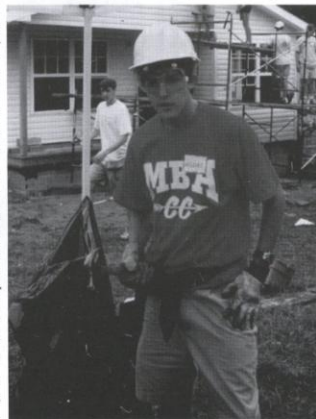
Being the class secretary, I met with William several times at the end of last year and during this summer. I must admit that at first my main goals were all related to how our class could benefit from being seniors. William quickly led us away from this idea. He wanted us to help

MBA benefit from our work.

William outlined his ideas on a hand written piece of paper towards the end of the last school year. Mr. Gioia and the other seven people that were meeting that day, including me, were shocked. He had already laid out several plans about how we could get the entire senior class extremely involved in various programs. By creating a number of committees, William aims to give every senior an opportunity to make sure that MBA remains an enjoyable place for everyone. These committees range from a campus cleanliness committee (aptly headed by Zach Wall) to a lunch service committee with many others in between.

William also aims to raise more money than any previous senior class. This money will go not only to the senior gift fund, but also to the senior trip fund, the senior prom fund and many other uses. To raise this money, he came up with ideas for a senior cookout, a senior concession stand, a senior car wash, and countless other innovative ideas.

When I asked William how he wanted to impact MBA in his year as the president he said, "I want to help bring the teachers and students closer together because in years past, there has been thick line between the students and their teachers. What I am



William Sisk, President of the Senior Class, is all decked out to work on the Habitat House

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really trying to accomplish is to make this line disappear. However I know that this will be hard. That is why, everyone, not just the officers, and not just the seniors, need to get involved and help lead the school."

During the first assembly of this year, William coined the term *Carpe Tomorrow*. With this term, he explained to the entire student body and faculty that "it is important to lay down the foundations of success that we all desire for the future by experiencing things today."

His major goal is to make the class of 2002 the most memorable class in MBA history. Although this goal seems a little far-fetched, it is easily attainable under the leadership of William.

everyone puts out maximum effort and leaves with a great sense of satisfaction.

Ever since its founding, the Service Club has existed as an extra-curricular juggernaut, overpowering all other MBA clubs. As revealed by the accounts above, two principles drive all Service Club workers: hard work and fun. Led by seniors Ryan Mirian, Tipton Horn, Andy Gray, Will Howorth, and Allen Callison, the 2001-2002 school year promises to be great. With the school year barely begun, over 70 MBA students have already volunteered their time. Unleashing an endless onslaught of volunteers for every project, the end of our dominance is nowhere in sight!

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Seniors Need Right MBA's Overachievers Mindset for New Year

by Michael Pass

"Doing things differently this year" seems to be the talk of the town at MBA recently. The call for change has found its most noticeable voice in the Senior Class President, William Sisk. But the story doesn't end at just wanting to be being different. Sisk believes that being greater than previous classes should concern all seniors: Greater involvement on campus, greater attendance at football games, greater school spirit, and greater responsibility. William plans to achieve his goal of creating, "the best class ever" by creating senior committees to run and organize student activities, avoiding any senior expulsions, and by organizing the first Senior Class Trip. The creation of Student Body President, instead of just a Student Council President, designed to be the advocate for all students' concerns, has paralleled Sisk's New Deal campaign. Mr. McBride and Mr. Caudill, seemingly more comfortable now in their second years as deans of the high school, feel that their coordinated work with Mr. Tillman will help the school run more smoothly and effectively.

So will this year be different?

At first glance it is tempting to say, yes, that everything is in place to ensure a great and unique year. This optimistic view, however, must be tempered by some sour realities. Before classes had even begun a number of seniors were severely disciplined and almost dismissed for attending a home football game on MBA's campus under the influence of alcohol. Although no one was expelled, the incident left a bad taste in everyone's mouth and served to undermine many of the senior class leaders' goals for the year. Can this year's senior class possibly accomplish its goals if its member's can't even start off the year without committing serious infractions of MBA policy? Can the class of 2002 really be different and better than previous classes?

The answers to these questions remain unclear. There is certainly a great deal of commitment from many senior leaders to fulfill the goals they have set out for themselves. It's certainly too early to begin judging how successful they will be, but MBA seniors and all MBA students can ensure a great year by making the senior leaders' goals their own.

by Deke Shearon

There are three types of overachievers at MBA. Before explaining these classifications, it is best to give a definition of the term, a lovable word invented in 1952 to describe "one who achieves success over and above the standard and expected level, especially at an early age." Since the standard or expected level of success at MBA is fairly high to begin with, overachievers stand out quite a bit. The first is the overachiever whose principle motivation is Fear. Fear of two adults with whom he lives: his parents.

This classification is often more dependent on the parents than the student himself. The parents tend to be sadists, former overachievers, or bitter parents who manifest the guilt they feel for the fun they had in high school by making their sons miserable. The second type is the overachiever who is successful because he wants to "get into a good college." This type of overachiever may or may not know what a "good college" is, and he may or may

not base that definition on the list provided in U.S. News and World Report. His personality can usually be condensed entirely into a 5-page college application. The third and final type of overachiever is The Competitor.

This particular species makes good grades simply because of the high he feels every time he gets a grade back better than the person sitting next to him. He is usually given away by his battle cry of "What'd you get? What'd you get?" uttered upon the reception of graded materials. The culmination of his life is usually Honors Night, when he judges his self-worth according to how many times he stands up.

Speculation ensues to this very day about a mythical fourth type, one who excels because of a general love of learning and desire to do well for the sake of doing well, but unfortunately an example of this type of overachiever has yet to be discovered.



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Deke Critiques a Range of Summer Movies

By Deke Shearon (Managing Editor)

Note: We here at the Bell Ringer have decided to employ a new, revolutionary type of arbitrary scoring for movies. Instead of being judged on a four-star scale, we will use a new unit, known as the Gioia. Four Gioias is the maximum a movie can receive, unless said movie features Jackie Chan.

Planet of the Apes:



A Tim Burton movie about apes couldn't go wrong, right? After all, a Tim Burton movie about a goth Johnny Depp with scissors for hands was pretty cool. So was a Tim Burton movie about a fat Danny DeVito with flippers for hands, and a Tim Burton movie with Paul "my pants fell off, officer, I swear" Reubens. Well, old Timmer's luck runs out with this one. A big, fat, festering pile of stupid. Sure, the costumes and makeup are incredible, but the screenplay makes about as much sense as a Dr. Crowell lecture as seen through the eyes of Blueboy from that episode of Dragnet. In spite of the slightly funny Charleton Heston cameo and the really cool opening credits, this stinker gets 2 Gioias.

Pearl Harbor:



Let me say this loud and clear,

so everyone can hear me. I HATE BEN AFFLECK. Ben, buddy, you were okay in Good Will Hunting, but after that, apparently you fired your old agent and hired Ronald Reagan. As for this particular film, it's no better than Armageddon, Reindeer Games, Bounce, or any other movie that has had the honor of having this little wad of ugly as a star. Okay, that one

scene with the POV shot of the bomb coming down was alright, but they even gave that away in the trailer. The whole serious-war thing is dumbed down for the sake of a PG-13 rating, so that all is left is some Sesame Street adaptation, sponsored by the letter D, for Dumb, Depressing, and Dragging. It looks like a TV version of a better movie. I give it 1/2 a Gioia, just because Disney had the chutzpah to try to market this movie to Japan.

Rush Hour 2:



Yet another affirmation of the painfully obvious fact that Jackie Chan is indeed the best person to have ever lived. Sure, Chris Tucker can get annoying, but come on, it's Jackie. In lieu of a plot summary, let me simply list some of this movie's trademark Funny Situations Involving Jackie Chan: Jackie listening to P. Diddy, Jackie getting a massage, Jackie buying clothes, Jackie in Vegas, and, best of all, Jackie running down a Hong Kong street, naked. What more do you need in a film, I ask you? Definitely the best movie of the summer, and, barring another sequel, a frontrunner for the best movie of all time. Do you even have to ask? 4 Gioias.

Legally Blonde:



I was dragged to see this movie by someone of the fairer sex, and was actually very surprised with how awful it was. It was positively painless. Reese Witherspoon smiles



and perks her way through the movie, still doing her smart-blonde schtick from

Election. The Evil Boyfriend gets what he deserves. The Ugly Friend even gets her comeuppance. Hey, it even doubles as a tour of Harvard, the movie's setting. It's kind of like Clueless, with California replaced by Cambridge, and without that nasty aftertaste that comes from realizing that Clueless came out six years ago and it's already dated. After the film, I remarked to my ladyfriend, "the movie was fine; it just required a lot of suspension of disbelief to buy a Harpeth Hall girl getting into Harvard." She punched me in the stomach. 3.5 Gioias.

The Mummy Returns:



Yeah, this movie came out before school ended last year, but I include it for one reason and one reason only. You guessed it, the presence of your friend and mine,

Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. This is not just because The Rock is a pro wrestler, a profession just shy of mafia boss in terms of sheer awesomeness. Rather, it is because the makers of this film obviously learned (from Suburban Commando, I suspect) the first commandment of Making Movies with Wrestlers: "thou shalt not give wrestlers lines." I was filled with love, contentment, with warmth just watching The Rock for all 10 minutes of his screen time, screaming

indignantly. I must deduct a whole Gioia, however, for the presence of Brendan Fraser, who,

like his School Ties buddy Affleck, is still an abomination to all things holy. 3 Gioias.

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The staff of The Bell Ringer prepares all copy, headlines, and photographs at Montgomery Bell Academy. EverReady Printing in Nashville, Tennessee, prints the paper.